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a trial, and especially to those who make a special study of that delightful branch of micro-botany, micro-fungi, I hope it will commend itself as a thoroughly efficient and simple method.—*George Clinch, in Science Gossip.*

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— Died, in Beverly, Massachusetts, Count Louis François de Pourtales. Count Pourtales was born in Neufchatel, March 4, 1823. He belonged to the Swiss branch of an old family which has branches also in France, Prussia and Bohemia. He was educated as an engineer, and came to this country about the same time as Agassiz, and became his fellow-worker and pupil. Upon the death of Agassiz the Count was appointed Keeper of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, which position he held at the time of his death. He had previously entered the service of the Government in the Coast Survey. His papers on the physical geography of the Caribbean sea and the Gulf stream established his reputation in Europe as well as in America. Through the death of his father he succeeded to his title, and received a fortune which gave him the opportunity of devoting himself wholly to his favorite studies. It is said that his modesty amounted almost to a fault, and that people wondered why a man who was the master of three languages should speak so little. With intimate friends, however, he would converse freely, and never without giving information and amusement. The Count was of strong frame, and his temperate mode of life gave hope of a long period of usefulness. He was stricken with a painful malady, and, after several weeks of great suffering, which he heroically endured, he died. His old friend and preceptor, Prof. Louis Agassiz, died seven years ago.

— The two first parts of a new botanical work by Dr. Dodelport, of Zurich, have just been published by Herr Cæsar Schmidt, of that city. The title of the work is "Illustrirtes Pflanzenleben," and it promises to become one of unusual interest. In Part I the lower fungi are described in a popular manner. The author undertakes to popularize the results hitherto attained in our knowledge of putrefaction and contagion-fungi. He describes their forms, their size, and their manner of propagation; introduces the reader to their mode of life, and points out the danger arising to the human race from these minute organisms. The description is accompanied by two excellent plates, in one of which we recognize a reproduction on a small scale of a plate from the same author's famous "Atlas der Botanik für Hoch und Mittelschulen." Another chapter treats of miasma and contagions, and gives a complete account of the present state of our knowledge of infection-fungi. Part II is devoted to carnivorous plants, and is even more generally interesting perhaps than the first. The work is profusely illustrated with the author's original drawings. Altogether it is sure to form a very welcome and valuable addition to botanical literature.—*Nature.*

— Some new experiments with regard to the influence of electricity on Bacteria have been published by Prof. Cohn, who adopted the method of sowing with Bacteria a sterilized mineral nutritive solution, subjecting them to electric currents, and noting the results. A Marie-Davy flask-element he finds to exert (according to strength of current) either no influence on the increase of Bacteria, or merely a retardative influence. On the other hand, the current from two powerful elements sterilized the nutritive solution completely at the positive pole in twelve to twenty-four hours, so that afterwards the Bacteria introduced did not increase. At the negative pole the action was weaker, the liquid not completely sterilized. At neither of the poles were the Bacteria killed, and when brought into another nutritive liquid they developed normally; on the other hand, yeast cells and mycelium fungus brought into the liquid that was sterile for Bacteria increased plentifully at the positive pole. A battery of five strong elements killed the Bacteria distributed in the liquid within twenty-four hours, and sterilized the liquid of both poles.—*English Mechanic.*

— The Eleventh Annual Report of the American Museum of Natural History in the Central Park, New York, states that the institution is now entirely out of debt, the members of the Board of Trustees having subscribed $27,250 to cover the indebtedness, which with the donations of other friends of the museum, leaves a small balance in the treasury. The city paid during the year, over $10,000 towards the maintenance of the museum. Valuable and costly additions in zoölogy, geology and anthropology have been made, while important additions have been made to the libraries deposited for safe keeping. Students from a number of institutions visit the libraries and collections; besides this efforts will be made to render the museum a direct benefit to the teachers and pupils of the public schools. We are glad to watch the development of this great and growing museum, and hope it will contribute still more decidedly to the advancement as well as the diffusion of science in New York, and be a means of rational enjoyment to the citizens.

— Mr. E Whymper is reported to have successfully accomplished the ascent of Chimborazo, the loftiest mountain in the Cordilleras of Ecuador. He took ten days in getting from the Rio Bamba two-thirds of the way up to the summit, and the difficulties encountered were greater than was expected, owing to the wind and the rarefaction of the air. On the top of the mountain the thermometer showed a temperature of 11° Fahr. There is no crater at all, but two peaks, both of which Mr. Whymper ascended; he found that the higher one was at an elevation of 21,982 feet above the sea-level, or nearly 12,000 feet above the valley of Quito.—*English Mechanic.*

— The American Academy of Arts and Sciences celebrated the first centennial since its foundation in Boston, on the 26th of May. This is the oldest scientific society in America next to the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. The formal exercises were held at the Old South Church, where Franklin was baptized; addresses being made by Hon. R. C. Winthrop, Ex-president Asa Gray and others. At the collation in the rooms of the academy, numerous delegates from home and foreign societies expressed their congratulations and good wishes. A large attendance crowded the hall of the academy.

— Died on the 5th Aug., Alvah James Ibbotson, aged 53 years. Mr. Ibbotson was a lithographic artist who stood at the head of his profession in this country. Most of the best plates of vertebrate fossils published by Leidy and Cope were his work, besides many plates of the fossil invertebrata published by Meek, White and others. He was remarkable for accuracy and artistic finish, as well as rapidity of execution. Mr. Ibbotson was a native of England, and had been in the employ of T. Sinclair and Sons, of Philadelphia, for twenty-five years.

— A German naturalist, in the course of inquiries as to the phosphorescence of the sea, has found that the phenomenon occurs whenever sea fishes are brought into a three per cent. salt solution. The luminosity begins apparently in the eyes, spreads over the whole fish, and increases day by day. The fish after some time seems luminous throughout. The phosphorescent substance is a kind of mucus, which appears dirty-white by day, and shines in the dark.

— Mr. J. A. Lintner has received the appointment of State Entomologist, the office, discontinued after Dr. Fitch's death, having been again established. The appointment is a most fitting one, as Mr. Lintner is well known as an excellent observer and clear writer on economic entomology, besides having done a high order of work in general entomology.